(c) Pun-Pun Morhar Dhardha, Punasi Reservoir, Sone Canal Modernisation, Subernarekhja Multipurpose Reservoir, Katri Reservoir and Kundghat Reservoir Projects are pending for approval in Central Water Commission.

(d) The clearance of the projects depends upon the promptness with which the State Government complies with the observations of Central agencies.

[English]

Illegal Smuggling by Diplomats

1303. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Indian diplomats role seen in art smuggling" appearing in 'The Hindustan Times', New Delhi dated February 8, 1997;

(b) if so, whether the facts of the matter have been ascertained by the Government;

(c) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the preventive measures being taken to ensure that no works of art/antiques are smuggled out of India especially by diplomats?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There is no evidence that any Indian diploment is involved.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Export and import of baggage of diplomats is governed by the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations which provides no immunity with regard to articles, the import or export of which is prohibited by the law. Therefore, any diplomat trying to smuggle in or out any item prohibited under law is subject to internationally accepted investigative and preventive procedures governing diplomatic corps. The implementation of the relevant law is ensured by the customs authorities of the concerned State.

Expressway in M.P.

1304. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the latest position in regard to construction of express highway between Dewas and Indore in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) the estimated cost of the 'express-way' and share of State and Union Government;

(c) whether land has been acquired; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G.VENKATRAMAN): (a) There is no such proposal under consideration at present.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Acupuncture System

1305. SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received any request to recognise acupuncture as a system of therepy;

(b) if so, the number of requests recevied by the Government for the purpose during the last three years and action taken on each of them; and

(c) the time by which the Government propose to recognise acupuncture as system of therapy by bringing a legislation on the pattern of "West Bengal Acupuncture System of Therapy Bill, 1996"?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Kanyakumari-Mysore N.H

1306. SHRI T. GOVINDAN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to construct National Highway from Kanyakumari to Mysore; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) No, Sir

(b) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Russian made Weapons

1307. SHRI RAM NAIK : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the Russian made weapons and other hardware in the possession of our Defence Forces;

(b) if so, whether the spare parts for these weapons and hardware are available in the international market; and

(c) if not, the steps taken/proposed to be taken to manufacture these spare parts in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government of India have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Russia on guaranteed supply of Defence equipment related items/spare parts, product support and comprehensive services needed for maintenance/repairs overhaul and modernisation. Following the